

Specifically, has the Agency been responsive to requests by CIARDS participants or their spouses for support in connection with divorce proceedings? Has Executive Order No. 12197 been effective in providing access by former spouses to CIARDS benefits?

We have informally contacted between 30 and 40 women--15 divorced and widowed spouses have responded to a questionnaire. The figures I will give you are based on the questionnaire, but none of the information gathered through the network, some of it firsthand, some secondhand about the experiences of friends, contradicts the information gathered through our questionnaire. Not all of the 15 answered every question so the numbers vary.

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The need for information is demonstrated by the fact that 8 of 8 who asked for information said they did not get it. [REDACTED]

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10 said they asked for help with service-incurred problems. 7 said they received no assistance or guidance. 1 received some counselling related to stress.

None of the women, divorced or married, knew of Executive Order 12197. At the time the Foreign Service Act of 1980 was implemented, memoranda were sent to each retiree. So far as we can ascertain, this was not done with CIA retirees.

In asking for information at the time of divorce, one woman said, "I didn't know what to ask for. There are so few of us (CIA wives) that lawyers don't know what to ask for, either."

Another woman said she called CIA. She was told to ask her lawyer to ask her husband's lawyer for information on pension plans. When they received the information, it was her husband's pay stubs for one month. Her lawyer said he thought that was the information on pension plan.

At the time of her trial, she had retained another lawyer. He was cloistered

with her husband's lawyer with the judge in his chambers. CIA representatives presented information about the pension plan. Her lawyer said he didn't understand "all those numbers." The only thing he understood was the amount of take-home pay. Yet there were amounts going to the Credit Union, for example, that were income.

On the basis of hearsay, a third divorcee asked her husband about allocation of survivor benefits to her. He said it was not possible. Since the husband was unwilling to seek information, and the wife did not know how, nothing has been done.

One wife--through her lawyer--asked CIA for/ but did not receive her marriage certificate, her children's birth certificates, her records of her service abroad. She could not obtain them because they were all in her husband's personal file, which could not be opened without her husband's permission. This he refused to give.

~~XXXXXXXX~~ More than one woman called directly with her questions because her lawyer's fees were over \$100 per hour. All were turned away with the instructions "Have your lawyer call us." None of these women knew that the reason CIA's Office of General Counsel would not talk to them ~~XX~~ was because the women had retained lawyers and it is legally unethical for a lawyer to talk to another lawyer's client. One woman said, "I think a husband can hide anything in the Headquarters Building that he wants to hide."

Among all the wives--divorced and still married--and widowed--all said they had undertaken operational assignments for CIA, duties and responsibilities [redacted] and many had undertaken volunteer assignments that would enhance the US image abroad.

The fact that all the wives we spoke to were ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ asked or volunteered to undertake unfamiliar responsibilities in new and strange countries indicated that training classes were necessary [redacted]

In speaking with wives still married to operational officers we discovered that they did not know of the services of the Family Employee Liaison Office. Som times they had heard of it only long after their return from a foreign country.

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For these reasons, many wives had served their tours only with the information they had managed to gather from their husbands. And for the first tour in a country, they found that the husband could offer only general information, with few specific details about living conditions.

For these reasons, we determined that a better flow of information to dependent spouses was essential. When asked to be a member of a task force on womens concerns, I was happy to accept the invitation to serve. From the start, however, we made clear that the legislation is rightly in the hands of Congress.

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